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INTRODUCTION

National Security Concept 2017 (hereinafter “the Concept) defines the objective, principles and course of action of Estonian security policy. This document has been prepared by the Government of the Republic and approved by the Parliament (*Riigikogu*). As a framework document it provides guidance for drafting national development and action plans. This document replaces the National Security Concept approved by the *Riigikogu* in 2010.

The Concept is amended or reviewed pursuant to changes in the security environment and developments of the Estonian national security system, but each composition of the *Riigikogu* shall update the Concept at least every four years. At least twice during the four-year cycle the Prime Minister shall inform the *Riigikogu* about achieving the goals set in the concept.

Estonia addresses its security as a part of a wider international security. Trends connected to globalisation and the impact of international crises and conflicts affect Estonia with increasing immediacy. In maintaining its security, Estonia seeks and supports ways and means that have a positive impact on Estonia as well as on other states.

Estonia’s approach is based on the conviction that security is generated to protect human rights, fundamental freedoms and basic human values. These values determine our way of life and Estonia represents them in general. When we honour democratic principles, our society can last and develop in a constant and sustainable manner.¹ In this way, a viable civil society and the people’s will to defend Estonia will grow stronger and Estonia’s position and reputation in the world will improve.

1. THE OBJECTIVE OF SECURITY POLICY AND THE PRINCIPLES FOR ITS REALISATION

The objective of Estonian security policy is to secure the Nation’s independence and sovereignty, the survival of the people and the state, territorial integrity, constitutional order and the safety of the population. In pursuing of its security policy, Estonia respects fundamental rights and freedoms and protects constitutional values.

Estonia’s security policy proceeds from principles listed in the Charter of the United Nations (UN), including the right and freedom of every country to choose its own security solutions. Estonia’s security policy is not directed against any other state. Estonia maintains its security through actively coordinated measures in foreign and domestic policy.

¹ Sustainable development—developing the social, economic and natural environment holistically and harmoniously, which will guarantee a sustainably good quality of life for people and a clean living environment, both now and in the future.

of disputes that had earlier been frozen have still not been resolved. Europe's security is influenced by migration flows—a problem that has been exacerbated by the slow and inefficient resolution of international conflicts. Ideological and religious extremism have taken greater hold globally and are increasingly attacking the democratic world and its foundations. Humanitarian crises are more common in today's world than before and it is increasingly difficult for the international community to counter them. The state of the global economy is still uncertain; the impact of climate change and inequality impinges on everyday life and development.

The global influence of the Western value space – based on democracy, the market economy, the rule of law and human rights – is decreasing, and ideological opposition to it is increasing all over the world. The United States is still the leading political, military and economic power but, in addition to developed industrial states, other nations have been developing their political, economic and military capabilities and are gaining more prominent role in resolving global issues. Several world regions contain states that would like to develop and function according to beliefs that diverge from universal principles.

Immediate threats to Estonia's security primarily depend on the security situation in the Euro-Atlantic region and the relations between its neighbouring countries. European security is affected by Russia's increased military activity and aggressive behaviour. Russia is interested in restoring its position as a great power and for that purpose will not refrain from coming into a sharp opposition with the West and the Euro-Atlantic collective security system. In addition to political, diplomatic, informational and economic means, Russia has used military power to achieve its objectives. Russia has strengthened its armed forces and increased its military presence on the borders of NATO member states, including in the Baltic Sea region and on Estonia's border. Russia's unpredictable, aggressive and provocative activity, e.g. airspace violations, offensive military exercises, and nuclear threats, is generating instability. Sanctions and other countermeasures applied to Russia have had a restraining effect, but the restoration of trust and cooperation depends on alleviating tensions and resolving the conflicts in which Russia is involved.

NATO is the foundation of security and defence cooperation in the Euro-Atlantic region and the cornerstone of collective defence. Actions intended to weaken NATO and the solidarity of allies, jeopardise Estonia and transatlantic security. The possibility of a military attack on Estonia cannot be ruled out if NATO's collective deterrence is not credible. Military coercion and the probability of military deployment against Estonia or another state in the Baltic Sea region have increased. At the same time, NATO's military predominance is sufficient to repel adversaries an attack now and in the near future. The visibility of NATO and the international security and defence cooperation, as well as the level of activity, has increased in the region; Baltic and Nordic states are engaging in more active cooperation.

The European Union and its fundamental freedoms have come under pressure and their cohesion has decreased. Global recession, the economic difficulties of some member states and subsequent political instability, increasing pressures on European borders from migration, the grown threat from terrorism, and one member state's decision to leave the Union are all testing its foundations and eroding its political impact and resilience,⁴ and may weaken the ties that bind the EU together. Signs of political radicalisation and the polarisation of politics are clearly evident in

⁴ A society's resilience is its ability to recover quickly from the impact of negative phenomena, and restore its strength, flexibility and success.

some democracies thus reinforcing other negative phenomena that create instability. In these conditions, the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and its coherence become more important than ever. The weakening of the ties that keep the European Union together may bring Russia to understanding that its aggressive policies are working and encourage it to proceed with its power politics.

Threats have become more complex and their sources more varied in recent decades. Asymmetric threats that know no state borders and whose sources are difficult to detect have emerged and their impact on security is comparable to traditional security threats. Today it is increasingly clear that security is influenced by economic instability; developments in the cyberspace; technology-related threats; radicalisation and terrorism; organised crime and corruption; migration flows; and variety of other emergencies.

The instability of the global economy makes the international security environment more complicated and reduces the ability of states and international organisations to react. The Estonian economy is closely connected to the world's. Estonia is therefore significantly influenced by global trends, including economic crises and the instability of important international markets. As a small country, Estonia is more vulnerable to changes in the global economic environment than large ones, since such changes have a faster and deeper impact on a small state, which is less able to manage risks and deal with their consequences. Changes in the global energy market, as well as in the established structure of energy supply between the European Union and Russia, may affect the Estonian economy.

The cyberspace has transformed human interaction and has become a part of global human development, but also a political and military battleground; public services depend on it. Information and communication technology and media can be used even more effectively to influence people and their level of information how people are informed. The influence of the reality distorting information has created tension in international relations, caused the radicalisation of certain groups and harmed the cohesion of society. Manipulating with and spreading of false information is widely used, also on a state level, to escalate conflicts. The number of violations in the cyberspace is increasing, and the perpetrators include terrorist groups and organised crime syndicates. Attacks are also launched by individuals and groups whose activity is too often supported and directed by states.

Estonia's digital services are integrated in large extent to the society. Without them it would be impossible to function as a modern state, and this increases the impact that potential attacks have on Nations security. Due to the connectivity between communications and information systems, an interruption in one vital service may influence the availability of many others, thereby endangering the functioning of the state as a whole. Cyber security and digital services are fields where Estonia's expertise is trusted on a global level, and Estonia is able to influence their development internationally. Not only Estonian residents but also the constantly growing community of international entrepreneurs related to Estonia depend on the quality and safety of Estonian digital services. E-residency has created responsibilities and obligations for the state also in relation to people who are not Estonian citizens and who do not physically live in the Republic of Estonia.

Being responsible for guarding the European Union's border, Estonia plays an important role in maintaining the reliability of the Schengen area. Ineffective or non-existent control of the internal borders of the Schengen area may be exploited to extend the reach of international

two components is critical. Networks of civilian volunteers and the private- public partnerships also play an important role.

As maintaining security anticipates effective cooperation of the state institutions and other stakeholders, joint planning is crucial for the better use of the state's and society's resources and the improvement of resilience. For this, clear management and planning, quick and concise decision-making, prompt division of labour and readiness to use their capabilities whatever their ownership is needed.

To achieve the main objective, it is necessary to:

- maintain world order based on international law and the UN Charter safeguard the global influence and strength of the democracy, rule of law and human rights, and fasten the identity based on these values
- deepen the solidarity of NATO and EU member states, also in issues concerning security
- increase the capabilities and effectiveness of diplomacy and the foreign service in reinforcing a world order founded on shared values and common rules
- strengthen the collective defence, enhance its efficiency and deterrence value, focusing on the defence of the Alliance's territory and consolidate the presence of combat-ready allied forces in Estonia and its vicinity
- develop independent defence capability based on actual and rapidly usable military capabilities
- implement the comprehensive national defence concept, focusing *inter alia* on development and funding critical capabilities, increase the efficiency of the cooperation between defence and security institutions, and employ to a greater extent the country's research potential
- empower a cooperative security system for the peaceful resolution of regional security issues
- improve strategic communication to strengthen the cohesion of society and reinforce the positive international image of the country, as well as consolidate psychological defence to neutralise hostile information attacks
- participate actively in international conflict prevention and crisis management, peacebuilding and global or regional humanitarian aid
- strengthen control of the country's borders (also the external border of the European Union), thereby reducing transnational threats and risks
- improve society's resilience by reducing the vulnerability of vital services and potential interruptions in the supply of food and potable water as well as enhancing emergency preparedness, civil emergency management, and protecting society from cyber threats by introducing effective cyber defence system
- guarantee that constitutional institutions and state governance are reliable and resilient, and that public services, state functions and key leadership are able to operate without interruption
- improve the reaction of internal security authorities to prevent security threats with grave consequences

and other fields of EU's courses of action are an important factor in maintaining Estonia's security. Estonia contributes to increasing the EU's international influence by taking part of the development and implementation of the CFSP and CSDP and stands for the greater cohesion of the European Union's external action. Developing EU defence cooperation and creating new more effective capabilities for member states will increase the Union's influence and strengthen security.

Political dialogue, close cooperation and bilateral coordination of EU and NATO activities is crucial for the effective protection of European and transatlantic interests. Estonia will continue to promote the cooperation between the European Union and NATO, including in the fields of strategic communication and situational awareness. As Russia has become more aggressive in the past decade, Estonia works for greater unanimity and consistency in EU's and NATO's Russian policy. Estonia supports the continued enforcement of the restrictive measures imposed until their reasons have been eliminated. As a neighbouring state, Estonia will cooperate with Russia on a practical level as much as necessary and will keep the options for dialogue open. The development of democracy and the rule of law in Russia would serve Estonia's interests.

Estonia supports enlargement of both the European Union and NATO. The enlargement will reinforce the Western values and virtues in Europe and around the World. Membership should primarily depend on a candidate state's readiness to bear responsibility and fulfilment of membership criteria. Drawing on its own experience, Estonia will support the integration of states that would like to join NATO and the European Union, and help them to carry out required reforms and develop civil society.

Estonia values the EU's and NATO's partnerships with third countries. Estonia promotes the European Union's neighbourhood policy and wants this to develop into an effective instrument in bringing the target states of the neighbourhood policy closer to the Union and increasing stability in those countries. As a member of NATO, Estonia approaches flexibly to all organisations' partnerships.

In addition to being active in international organisations, Estonia develops bilateral relations that help to secure its international status, find common interests and conduct joint activities, thereby increasing Estonia's security. Broad cooperation with all allies and partnerships with similarly minded democratic states are an intrinsic part of Estonian security.

A good relationship between Estonia and the United States reinforces Estonian security and transatlantic cooperation. US involvement in maintaining of European security is the central factor in the security of Estonia and the whole of Europe. For Estonia, the strong transatlantic link is manifested in the US presence, including its military presence in Europe, cooperation within NATO, and relations between the EU and the United States, which are also the prerequisite for resolving global political, economic and environmental issues. It is important to deepen EU-US cooperation in international organisations, tighten economic and trade relations, and facilitate cooperation in internal and legal matters and in the field of energy security and research. Estonia wishes to promote extensive bilateral relations in all significant fields with the United States and deepen the dialogue between the two countries.

Estonia wants to maintain a good relationship with all its neighbouring states. Its objective is to maintain and develop security in the Baltic Sea region. Closer cooperation between the Nordic and Baltic states is in Estonia's interests. In this way, the country can promote political dialogue and security cooperation, including in the fields of defence, energy, environmental protection

The objective is to prevent and pre-empt terrorism in all its forms, achieving it without violating people's fundamental rights and ensuring the proportionality and flexibility of the applied measures. Estonia has the objective to develop a support system for victims of terrorism and contribute to programmes that help people who have de-radicalised to return to society.

In fighting corruption, Estonia prevents and pre-empts the proliferation of organised crime, the black economy and money laundering, herewith avoiding harming the country's reputation. Corruption is prevented in both the public and private sectors, focusing on increasing awareness and the capability of law-enforcement authorities to detect and investigate offences.

Estonia will improve ways of informing people of potential threats and in time of emergency will inform public by communication means how to act. As part of emergency preparedness, more training exercises involving all related parties will be organised, the prevention of emergencies and dealing with their consequences will be reviewed, and using the Estonian Defence Forces capabilities in emergency relief will be improved. Estonia supports voluntary activity undertaken to prevent threats and cope with emergencies.

Like many other states, Estonia must improve concurrently with preventive measures its reaction capability and rate. In neutralising threats the swift and efficient cooperation of all agencies, clear and concise guidelines, communication, and cooperation with international partners are more important than ever. In addition to developing IT systems, the country must also focus on modernising existing systems.

3.4 Conflict prevention and crisis management

Estonia emphasises the importance of the international conflict prevention. Countering the crises where they emerge reduces its impact to Estonia, its allies and the world as a whole. Contributing to dialogue and communication with its partners Estonia emphasises the importance of preventive diplomacy and supports the international actors in preventing conflicts.

Participating in international peace operations and civil missions is an opportunity, but also an obligation to help maintain security and stability in our vicinity and elsewhere in the world. Estonia participates in international operations, civil crisis management, humanitarian operations and peacebuilding, as well as in generation of international formed to carry out these operations with capabilities that are developed in accordance of the country's priorities and needs. It is in Estonia's interests that conflict prevention and crisis management measures and tools are effective, deployable, and available without National caveats and with clear division of labour. Estonia supports the EU's comprehensive approach to conflict prevention and crisis management. Estonia is prepared to deploy internal security units to states that need support in coping with migration pressures and combating transnational crime on the EU's external border, including in securing the proper functioning of the Schengen area.

In order to maintain security and stability, prevent conflicts and manage crises, Estonia provides humanitarian aid and carries out development cooperation, the purpose of which is the political, economic and social development of the target state, and the stability that goes with it. In alleviating humanitarian crises, Estonia values cooperation between aid organisations and assisting states and the ability to provide aid quickly and independently. Estonia considers it necessary to improve the use of resources in development cooperation and endeavours to meet the funding obligation taken on as a member of the European Union. In bilateral development

To ensure the more effective functioning of civil protection system in times of large-scale and long-term crisis, the government will inform the population, provide instructions on how to cope independently, and create adequate operational stockpiles to deal with the emergency. Civil protection works through cooperation between the state, local governments, the private sector, civil society and individuals. If necessary, it is supported by the civil protection undertaken by international organisations and measures set out in bilateral agreements.

The continuity of vital services is of the utmost importance in the context of security and safety. To achieve this, the state applies measures to prevent emergencies and keep potential consequences to a minimum in cooperation with all actors in society, monitoring the measures' performance more closely than ever. Many vital services are provided by the private sector, so it is critical to strengthen cooperation between the public and private sectors in ensuring their continuous operation. The provision of these services not only depends on internal factors but is also influenced by global events and developments in the world economy. This have to be considered in planning.

Estonia takes measures to monitor climate change, neutralise its risks and deal with the consequences on the local, regional and national level to reduce vulnerability created by it. The best results are achieved through international cooperation and the balanced development of conservancy and environmental protection, the economy and social sphere, and the intentional and considered use of a well-functioning system intended for development as well as the funds allocated for environmental protection. In addition to the national and local government level, the private sector and non-governmental sectors and research facilities will be involved in enhancing measures for adapting to the impact of climate change.

Estonia applies measures to prevent the spread of hazardous substances and materielle and to neutralise sources of pollution on land and sea. Estonia develops maritime traffic management and monitoring systems for the Baltic Sea, primarily the Gulf of Finland, in cooperation with other states to prevent marine pollution. In order to discover pollution as early as possible and identify the source, the long-distance surveillance of marine pollution, including aerial surveillance, must be improved.

To prevent major accidents and alleviate their consequences interagency cooperation in planning the location of and monitoring the activity of businesses where those accidents might occur must be improved. Estonia has an early warning system for radioactivity detection, to identify and warn of radiation accidents in nuclear power stations close to Estonia as early as possible. Estonia engages in international cooperation with the EU, NATO and states in the Baltic Sea region to react to major incidents promptly, promote protection against radiation, improve the safety of nuclear plants and reduce possible radiation exposure in the Baltic Sea region. Estonian rescue and crisis management units and experts could be used in UN rescue and aid missions.

Health protection helps people cope with their daily lives and increases their contribution to society and the economy, thereby reinforcing the cohesion of society and also raising the country's ability to neutralise security threats. With globalisation and open societies, the probability of the spread of epidemics and epizootics has increased and the state must be always ready for prevention and their elimination. Diseases that are still unknown and incurable may spread, lack of knowledge or low awareness may cause uncertainty and unsubstantiated fear in the population.

turn out to be problematic in the distant future, they must be acknowledged and measures needed to solve certain issues should be discussed now.

The biggest issue that depends on Estonia itself and may turn out to be a security risk is its demographic condition. The Estonian population is ageing and decreasing. Global demographic trends are the opposite and, if their influence is combined with potential negative changes in the living environment, an economic recession, radicalisation and conflicts or crises, it may be that waves of migration of a magnitude never before seen will occur, and Estonia will become a potential target country for these.

In 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Achieving these would reduce the root causes of conflicts and create global conditions for the survival of humankind. Relevant measures concerning environmental, economic and social development should alleviate tensions arising from poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, bad governance, population growth and low employment, and help to create conditions that allow the global population (which will potentially number more than ten billion) to coexist and develop peacefully. Should the global society fail in reaching these goals, security pressures will increase and tensions will become keener. These may grow into a large-scale conflict or global chaos. As a member of the global community and a recognised developed country, Estonia must participate in promoting sustainable development, and society has a distinct role in achieving the aforementioned goals. First and foremost, this consists in admitting that Estonian society is a part of the rest of the world and that we are responsible for what is happening there. If we consciously and deliberately participate in the process, the results will be better and more substantial. Security risks will be neutralised more effectively if we do not ignore the process or pay little attention to it.

Technological evolution is speeding up and its influence on security and warfare, as well as on people's daily life and behaviour, is evident. Modern smart technologies and their applications will be replaced by next-generation intelligent technologies able to make decisions independently in addition to analysing information. The application of artificial intelligence, genetics, bio- and nanotechnology and our increasing ability to harness solar and magnetic fusion energy create new possibilities that will change our living environment and existence to a remarkable extent. Besides the major positive impacts, the use of new technologies will also be accompanied by threats and risks; old ones will be complemented by new that require novel countermeasures and solutions. In the context of security and defence, this means that if a potential opponent's technological solutions are very advanced, we need to work hard to ensure that the defence organised against them is smart, preventive and well thought through. Procuring strategic security technology and acquiring, developing and applying the knowledge and skills related to it are important and inescapably necessary to all independent states, and Estonia needs to pay more attention to this.

